

REMARKS

Claims 2 and 3 are presented for consideration, with Claim 2 being independent.

Claim 2 has been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Okuno '107. In addition, Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Okuno in view of Niki '820. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' invention as set forth in Claim 2 relates to a manipulator comprised of a plurality of arm members whose attitudes can be changed, a manipulation target object manipulating hand mounted on the plurality of arm members through a connecting portion, and an actuator operatively coupled to at least one of the arm members for changing the attitudes of the plurality of arm members. As amended, Claim 2 recites that the attitudes including a parallel state and an intersection state of the arm members are changed by controlling the actuator, thereby causing rotation of the hand about an axis parallel to the arm members in the parallel state.

Support for the amendments to Claim 2 can be found, for example, in Figure 1A and the accompanying specification beginning on page 9, line 11. In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, a high performance manipulator can be provided.

The Okuno patent relates to a robot arm mechanism that includes a handling member for supporting and handling an object and a robot arm comprising at least four arm links.

With reference to Figure 31, the robot arm 970 includes first and second arms links 971, 972, and third and fourth arm links 973, 974. A robot hand, or handling member, 125 is secured to two of the arm links. In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, however, Okuno fails to teach or suggest, among other features, the capability of rotating the handling member about an axis parallel to arm link members that are in the parallel state.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 is respectfully requested.

The secondary citation to Niki relates to a rectilinear motion device and was cited for its teaching of a cylindrical actuator. Niki fails, however, to compensate for the deficiencies in Okuno as discussed above with respect to Claim 2. The proposed combination of art, therefore, still fails to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claim 2 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claim 3 sets forth additional features of Applicants' invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Appln. No.: 10/802,819

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Scott D. Malpede/

Scott D. Malpede
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 32,533

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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